

Joint Statement

Parliamentary Summit on Climate Change and Just Transition in Latin America and the Caribbean

20 April 2023

We, parliamentarians of Latin America and the Caribbean participating of the Parliamentary Observatory on Climate Change and Just Transition (OPCC), gathered in Santiago, Chile, on the occasion of the First Parliamentary Summit on Climate Change and Just Transition in Latin America and the Caribbean,

Aware of the leading role played by the legislative power in driving the construction of effective legislative frameworks for the just transition to sustainable and low-carbon economies in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recalling the purpose of the OPCC to provide a shared information tool on the state of environmental legislation and parliamentary treatment in Latin America and the Caribbean, and thus contributing to the objectives of the so called “Escazú Agreement” in terms of legislative information and data transparency, access and sharing on environmental matters,

Reaffirm our commitment, within the scope of the OPCC, to inform, update and ensure access to environmental information and legislative data from our parliaments,

Reiterate the need for prompt and full implementation of political agreements within our parliaments, including the need for immediate ratification of the “Escazu Agreement” by States that have not done so yet, and full compliance with the “Escazú Agreement” in the States where it is in force, the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Bearing in mind the risks associated with the deepening of inequalities among the countries of our region, we reaffirm our commitment to promote, from our Parliaments, initiatives of international integration and solidarity in the pursuit of collective solutions, especially supporting the nations most affected by the catastrophic impacts of climate change, with special mention to the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS);

We commit to the co-construction of a concrete agenda of actions linked to (i) Ecosystem Conservation, (ii) Financing Framework, and Green and Sustainable Taxonomy; (iii) Budgeting for Sustainability; and (iv) Sustainable and Climate Resilient Development and Green Industrialization Toward a New Economic Model.

Ecosystem Conservation

Convinced that healthy ecosystems and biodiversity are the strongest natural protection against climate change and aware of the special role played by the ecosystems of the Amazon, the Gran Chaco, the Andean Glaciers, and the Caribbean coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass beds among other ecosystems, in the regulation of climate, as carbon sinks and in the protection of coasts and the water cycle within our territories, among other functions crucial to our system,

We commit to making use of our legislative functions, to drive initiatives for the protection, conservation and restoration of ecosystems, pursuing the necessary increase the surface area of protected natural areas in line with the “30x30” target of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, promoting the creation of ecological corridors and other areas for the conservation of species, thereby providing them with legal security through specific regulations.

Furthermore, we commit to promoting the monitoring of state public policies and control tasks, establishing multi-actor processes to reduce the risks of land encroachment, the unsustainable expansion of the agricultural sector, and the illegal extractive activities in protected areas.

We commit, moreover, to support the development of robust environmental justice systems that incorporate environmental violations into criminal justice systems, recognizing social aspects and human life that exist within ecosystems as fundamental for all societies in the world, and taking into account that climate change disproportionately affects different groups of the world's population, especially in relation to race, ethnicity, gender, income level, and schooling.

We commit ourselves to create conditions for the security of Indigenous Peoples, Quilombolas, Traditional Peoples, citizens of the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and other groups that are disproportionately more affected by the climate crisis, both in their communities and individually, by promoting appropriate conservation of ecosystems in order to combat climate change and ensure a just transition.

We commit, in our parliamentary capacities within the world's most biodiverse region, to build climate solutions jointly with local communities, Native and Traditional Peoples, by strengthening a dialogue that values their ancestral knowledge and technologies and addressing issues of environmental racism and social inequalities, ensuring their protection, as well as the protection of their territories and traditions.

Finally, in coordination with local governments, civil society, and the scientific community, we commit to develop regulations and legislative initiatives that generate opportunities for implementing nature-based and sustainable economic alternatives without putting ecosystems at risk, considering traditions and ancestral knowledge and ensuring the protection of Native and Traditional Peoples.

Financing Framework, and Green and Sustainable Taxonomy

Emphasizing that the just transition to low-carbon and sustainable economies requires targeted investment and expenditure to set this transformation in motion,

We commit to establish a financing framework that promotes investments that not only mitigate climate change also foster climate resilience, promote adaptation and are linked to loss and damage, by providing financial support to investments in public infrastructure, premises and green communities.

We commit to establish a green and sustainable taxonomy that defines criteria according to which investments can be considered green and sustainable, contributing to creating an environment of trust and security that ensures transparency, control and monitoring, minimizing the risks of greenwashing and allowing decision makers to identify investments that are environmentally and socially sustainable and in line with long-term sustainable development, climate and social objectives.

We commit, as legislators from Latin America and the Caribbean, to work together to identify and agree on shared criteria to harmonize common minimum elements of green and sustainable taxonomies in our region, understanding and recognizing that green and sustainable taxonomies must also present differentiations that reflect the specificities between countries, especially in relation to their contribution to specific environmental and social objectives.

We are committed to advocating for regulations to establish a serious, transparent, and rigorous assessment system for specific environmental and social performance criteria to determine whether they meet the requirements of the taxonomy of green and sustainable investments.

Budgeting for Sustainability

Emphasizing the importance of public spending in the just transition to sustainable, low-carbon economies, and appreciating that a healthy environment, including the including the conservation and restoration of natural ecosystems is crucial for our survival,

We commit to setting a common and high standard for publicly funded projects and actions that addresses the need to ensure that all public spending and investment is sustainable; and that ensures that public infrastructure and facilities are climate resilient.

We commit to promoting the mainstreaming of the concepts of sustainability and climate resilience in our national budgets, including the development of minimum green and climate-resilient criteria that all publicly-funded projects and initiatives must meet.

We commit to promoting regulations that define maximum acceptable levels of ecosystem impact in the development and operation of infrastructure and facilities, as well as targets for energy efficiency, water efficiency, and waste management.

Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Development and Green Industrialization Toward a New Economic Model

Considering the opportunities for human well-being and prosperity that stem from increased efforts and investments for the strengthening of ecosystem services, the regeneration of biodiversity and natural ecosystems, the circular economy, the reduction of the carbon footprint of the different production and consumption sectors, mitigation, adaptation, and resilience to climate change.

Understanding that the abundance of natural resources in our region, which is unique globally, can translate into a comparative advantage and an opportunity for economic development and the health, resilience, and prosperity of people, communities, and populations,

Recognizing the urgent need to overcome once and for all the dichotomy between socio-economic development and care for the environment,

We affirm that the transition to a low-carbon and sustainable economy must be the central focus and inseparable element of a country's development strategy, at the heart of which must be the objective of ensuring human rights, human dignity and promoting the well-being of the people of our region in all their diversity.

We commit to working actively from our parliaments to foster the development of manufacturing, industrial, eco-tourism, and sustainable agriculture capacities in the region, by advocating for promoting and investment schemes in the green economy, green industrialization, electromobility and knowledge economy, among other strategic sectors for sustainable development, in order to retain in our countries the jobs, income, and economic prosperity that low-carbon and sustainable investments can generate, including long-term strategic planning.

Based on our role in the different parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean, we commit to promoting regulations to accelerate the just and sustainable energy transition and promote strategic sectors, in order to build a new economic model that supports a healthy environment, human life in its diversity and sustainable development.

We also commit ourselves to identify, through a process of dialogue between parliamentarians participating in the OPCC and within the framework of existing regional integration processes, such as the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Andean Community (CAN) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), common mechanisms for measuring, compensating, and reducing the impacts of our manufacturing, agriculture, and tourism activities, and for an agile and transparent implementation of payment for ecosystem services mechanisms.

We urge parliamentarians around the world to join our efforts in this initiative, through inter-parliamentary cooperation and alliance for the common goals and challenges we have as parliamentarians of the Global South.

Signatories:

<p>X  Senator Gladys González President of the Environment and Sustainable Development Commission of the Argentine Senate, Argentina Senate</p>	<p>X  Senador Jaques Wagner (PT-BA) Senator Jaques Wagner Leader of Government at the Federal Senate of Brazil Senado Federal do Brasil</p>
<p>X  Senator Cecilia Isabel Requena Zárate Secretary of the Commission on Land and Territory, Natural Resources and the Environment of the Chamber of Senators of the Plurinational State of Bolivia</p>	<p>X  Representative Juan Carlos Lozada Member of the Afro-Colombian Legal Commission House of Representatives of the Congress of the Republic of Colombia</p>
<p>X  Deputy Ximena García Secretary of the Commission on Natural Resources and Conservation of the Human Environment, Chamber of Deputies of the Argentina Nation</p>	<p>X  Deputy Maximiliano Ferraro Member of the Commission of Natural Resources and Human Environment Conservation Chamber of Deputies of the Argentina Nation</p>
<p>X  Deputy Célia Xakriabá President of the Amazon and Native Peoples Commission Chamber of Deputies of Brazil</p>	<p>X  Senator Ximena Ordenes Neira Member of the Commission on Future Challenges, Science, Technology and Innovation, Senate of Chile</p>
<p>X  Deputy Nilto Tatto Member of the Environment Commission Chamber of Deputies of Brazil</p>	<p>X  Sr. Gwendol Marcelina, Member of the Parliament Curaçao</p>
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<p>X  Mr. Eliezer Benito Wheatley Special Envoy of the Premier of the British Virgin Islands</p>	<p>X  Honorable Sr. Melvin "Mitch" Turnbull Minister of Natural Resources and Labor British Virgin Islands</p>
<p>X  Deputy Mtro. Federico Ruiz Member of the Special Commission on Environment of Representatives, House of Representatives of Uruguay</p>	<p>X  Senator Leila Barros President of the Environment Commission Federal Senate of Brazil</p>
<p>X  Deputy Consuelo Veloso Avila Member of the Committee on Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development, Chamber of Congress of Chile</p>	<p>X  Senator Juan Ignacio Latorre Chairman of the Commission on Environment, Climate Change and National Assets, Senate of Chile</p>
<p>X  Deputy Kattia Cambonero Aguiluz Member of the Environmental Commission Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica</p>	<p>X  Assembly Member Washington Varela Salazar President of the Permanent Commission of Biodiversity and Natural Resources, National Assembly of Ecuador</p>

X	 _____ Senator Emilio Alvarez Icaza Member of the Environment Commission and Metropolitan Areas and Mobility Senate of the Republic of Mexico
X	 _____ Senator Raúl Bolaños-Cachos Cue President of the Environment Commission Senate of the Republic of Mexico
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X	 _____ Senator Nancy de la Sierra President of the International Organizations Commission Senate of the Republic of Mexico
X	 _____ Deputy Gabriel Silva Member of the Population, Environment and Development Commission, National Assembly of Panama